

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
Joint meeting with Housing Committee
MINUTES

Date: August 24, 2021
Time: 2:01pam
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present at the meeting in person were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie.

Others present via zoom: Fred Gordan, Bruce Kafenbaum, Ken Walto, Mark Holmes, James Scalise, Richard Stanley, Richard Allen, Ned Baldwin.

The meeting was audio and video recorded.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with Housing Committee members the committees mission, review the contract for services with S&K Design, and to clarify the role of Mr. Walto who has been assigned to Egremont under a Technical Assistance Grant from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission(BRPC).

The history of our steps towards trying to get some form of affordable housing was outlined.

The Committee is tasked with identifying property for possible housing, supporting the Egremont Housing Trust, reaching out to rental unit owners to gauge interest in long term rentals vs short-term, moving forward with developing the town's property set aside for housing, and enhancing voters awareness about the need for housing.

It was noted that the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has outlined Affordable Housing as an approved use for the funds that the Town has been awarded. Peg McDonough, ARPA Administrator, will be asked to get in touch with the Housing Committee.

The Town has set aside just over 6 acres near town hall for housing.

Jim Scalise, S&K Design, has been contracted to do fieldwork & research towards a feasibility study of the town's land to determine density, water source, traffic flow, site access, permitting time line and construction estimates. When this field work is taking place the Fire Department will be consulted regarding access. It is a challenging area. Jim has submitted, pro-bono, some early concepts of plans that would include 10 units on the site. Jim said that the Town needs to make some fundamental decisions on the use of the site. He offered his help pro-bono to put heads together to do so.

Bruce Kafenbaum was introduced to the group as a possible Project Manager when construction begins.

Ownership vs rental was discussed. While rental units are a pressing need, some felt that ownership units are more suitable for this first Egremont work force housing.

The need for garages can be determined later.

Type of units, single vs multi units, can be determined after the density feasibility study is conducted. Jim Scalise is confident he can design some unique variety.

The operation/management of the project is what a request for proposals (RFP) will determine. The possibility of a 40B project was mentioned.

Fred Gordon said that all share a common goal of affordable housing that Egremont can be proud of. He sees a non-for-profit being interested as the project is too small for a private developer. Density is important to know before any decisions are made going forward. A mixed ownership and rental project might be ideal.

An inventory of all rentals in Egremont should be conducted.

Work force housing vs affordable housing was defined by Fred.

Ken Walto said that his role through the BRPC technical assistance grant can be to serve as liason to S&K Design, help with a financing plan and the RFP, bidding and decision process. His time ends June 30, 2022 and is only ½ time for other towns besides Egremont.

Adjournment took place at 3:08pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.22/aug24

The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.